
Six Point Economic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

In the County Executive's inaugural speech on December 1, 2014, he introduced his Six-Point Economic Plan to position Montgomery County for greater economic success. Collectively, these six points represent some of the most pressing priorities to grow Montgomery County's economy by enhancing transit and fiber connectivity, stimulating entrepreneurial activities, reducing office vacancy, improving regulatory process, and revamping workforce to meet both industry and community needs. Since his announcement, several new initiatives have been started, building on the success of the Six Point Economic Plan.

LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULTS AREAS

- ❖ ***A Responsive, Accountable County Government***
- ❖ ***An Effective and Efficient Transportation Network***
- ❖ ***Healthy and Sustainable Communities***
- ❖ ***A Strong and Vibrant Economy***
- ❖ ***Vital Living for All of Our Residents***

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Lily Qi of the Office of the County Executive at 240.777.2524 or Pofen Salem of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2773 for more information regarding this initiative's operating budget.

FY17 RECOMMENDED ENHANCEMENTS

In addition to existing resources promoting the County's economic growth through strategic development efforts, the FY17 Recommended Budget provides approximately \$6.3 million in tax-supported resources for the implementation of the Six Point Economic Plan. Those efforts include the creation of independent entities to improve targeted business assistance, support entrepreneurial growth, and create better coordinated workforce and economic development systems, as well as implementing development approval process and business climate improvements, transportation accessibility, and enhanced Internet broadband connectivity.

Offices of the County Executive (CEX)

- Restructure and privatize economic and workforce development functions with the creation of two private, non-profit corporations: the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) and WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. (WSM). The Department of Economic Development will cease operations at the end of FY16 and the majority of departmental functions will be transferred to MCEDC and WSM.
- Provide funds to support personnel and operating expenditures of the MCEDC in year one (\$4,180,750).
- Add funds to support full-year operations of WSM for workforce programs and service delivery (\$982,344).
- Continue funding support for the MC Squared Initiative to expand the County's business incubator networks which has leveraged additional funding of \$650,000 from BioHealth Innovation, the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Maryland Department of Commerce, Alexandria Real Estate Equities and angel investors.

Department of Finance

- Add funds to the MOVE Program to continue the County's efforts to attract new businesses and reduce the amount of vacant Class A and B office space (\$500,000).

Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

- Add two Information Technology (IT) specialists in the Director's office and one Division Chief to improve permitting processes (\$316,389).

Department of Technology Services (DTS)

- Add funds to support grant writing, digital inclusion, planning, and communications and marketing for the ultraMontgomery initiative in addition to \$1.124 million in capital funding in support of connections to Ashburn data centers, universities, and regional fiber networks (\$200,000).

Department of Transportation (DOT)

- Provide funds to support Express Services from Clarksburg to Shady Grove Metro Station (\$117,438). Additionally, the County provides capital funding of \$6.5 million to plan and design a high-quality Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to enhance connectivity to employment centers and \$5 million to move the MD 355BRT Study to a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) stage.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Offices of the County Executive

- Advance three initiatives to improve business services delivery and make the County more welcoming: a web-based Business Portal that will create a single point of entry for businesses when they need to interact with the County; a Regulatory Reform Commission that will examine ways to simplify and streamline regulatory processes beyond what has already been accomplished through development streamlining; and a revived focus on customer service excellence to meeting resident and business needs.
- The MC Square initiative, which includes a new start-up business accelerator, is committed to accelerating, connecting, and retaining early-stage companies in the County for long-term economic growth. This suite of entrepreneurship resources and programs are designed to build the County's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem:
 - Relevant Health is Montgomery County's health technology accelerator located at the Rockville Innovation Center and is a partnership between the BioHealth Innovation, Inc., and several other key partners. The five-month program provides intensive product development support, mentorship, a structured curriculum on product management, technical support, business and investor connections, and capital. The first cohort ran from October 2015 through March 2016 and included seven small businesses that were selected from an applicant pool of 75 companies. The companies are led by founders from a diverse array of fields, including physicians, engineers, technologists, and health professionals and feature emerging digital health technologies, such as wearables, population health management, and gamified therapy. In FY17, the program will benefit from greater brand recognition that will continue to gain notoriety through publicity from the initial graduate companies and partners.
 - Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Venture Mentoring Services is now active in Montgomery County. Through the partnership with the Tech Council of Maryland, the County's entrepreneurs are working with its founding mentors who represent the County's serial technology entrepreneurs, angel and venture capitalists, seasoned professional service providers, and government contracting experts to identify business growth opportunities.
 - 1776 Partnership, a tech hub in the District of Columbia, is partnering with Montgomery County to give businesses access to resources and expertise and allow companies with public-serving technologies to test and deploy them in real-life settings in the County.

Department of Finance

- The MOVE Program was expanded in February 2015 as an innovative program that focuses on attracting new businesses and new jobs to the County, while reducing the County's vacant Class A and B office space. New businesses receive a one-time grant of \$8 per square foot toward their new lease agreement. The grant only applies to businesses that execute at least a three-year lease for Class A or B office space that is less than or equal to 10,000 square feet. As of February 2016, the MOVE Program has provided nearly \$817,000 in grants, attracting 31 new businesses and 219 new jobs to the County.
- The BUILD Program is an initiative supported by the Montgomery County Economic Development Fund. It is designed to increase the number of construction jobs and the commercial tax base by selectively spurring the construction of Class A office spaces and hotels in the County. Through this program, approved property owners receive from 25 to 50 percent of the additional real property taxes generated by the new development through an annual grant payment that last ten years.

Department of Permitting Services

- Streamlining the development process continues to be a priority for the County Executive. For FY17, the County Executive will continue funding in DPS for the following activities:
 - Implement initial review and comment within 30 days for properly prepared and electronically submitted commercial plans;
 - Reduce the processing time for sediment control plans;
 - Conduct frequent development review meetings with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC);
 - Continue the Department's move to electronic plan review and electronic permit processing; and
 - Improve coordination of construction that impacts public rights-of-way in County business districts, while facilitating orderly construction activities.

Department of Technology Services

- ultraMontgomery supports the evolution of a collaborative high-speed fiber network that will connect people with opportunities and drive economic growth by linking our business, academic and Federal institutions and transit-oriented smart-growth communities. Through a public-private partnership, ultraMontgomery will provide the computing speed needed for knowledge-based jobs and promote Montgomery County as a test bed to develop and explore next generation Internet applications. ultraMontgomery will not only foster innovation and collaboration among our life sciences, biotech, medical device, cybersecurity, managed services, and other IT companies within the County, it will help to attract these companies. A key component of ultraMontgomery is expanding the direct high-speed fiber connections between businesses, Federal agencies and universities in Montgomery County to the cloud-service providers and data centers in Ashburn, Virginia - the hub through which more than 90 percent of the East Coast's Internet traffic passes. ultraMontgomery will also promote digital inclusion, public wifi, connected communities to ensure that all County residents can participate in the Internet economy.

Department of Transportation

- The County will partner with the State on the next phase of project planning for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on MD 355. Also, the County Executive is recommending the funding necessary to implement the Ride On Plus priority service from the Lakeforest Transit Center to the Medical Center Metrorail Station. He is also recommending express bus service from Clarksburg to Shady Grove Metrorail Station to begin in Spring 2017.
- The County is programming funds for planning and design of a high-quality US 29 BRT with the intent of getting this route up and running in less than four years.
- The current State-led BRT planning study on Veirs Mill Road will result in a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in FY17. Following selection of an LPA, the County Executive will evaluate options for design and construction.
- The County Executive supports the State plan to seek Federal funding for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT). The project has reached the 30 percent design milestone and funding for final design is included in the State's budget.
- The Purple Line light rail project continues to be the County's top transportation priority. The County continues to partner with the Maryland Transit Administration to implement the Purple Line project and the associated County-funded projects (Capital Crescent Trail, Bethesda Metro South Entrance, and Silver Spring Green Trail).

Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) – Non-Departmental Account

- On June 30th, 2015 the County Council approved legislation to privatize the County's economic development functions that led to the creation of the MCEDC. The 11-member private sector board was largely confirmed by the County Council on November 3, 2015, following appointment by the County Executive. MCEDC will receive funding from the County for its core operations and raise additional funds to expand its programs.

WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. (WSM) – Non-Departmental Account

- In October 2015, WSM became the County's designated workforce development entity, with the Workforce Development Board establishing workforce policy for the County and WSM to implement. WSM will unify and coordinate the County's workforce programs and organizations to connect our residents and employers with one another. It will serve unemployed and underemployed residents as well as County businesses who need access to talent.

